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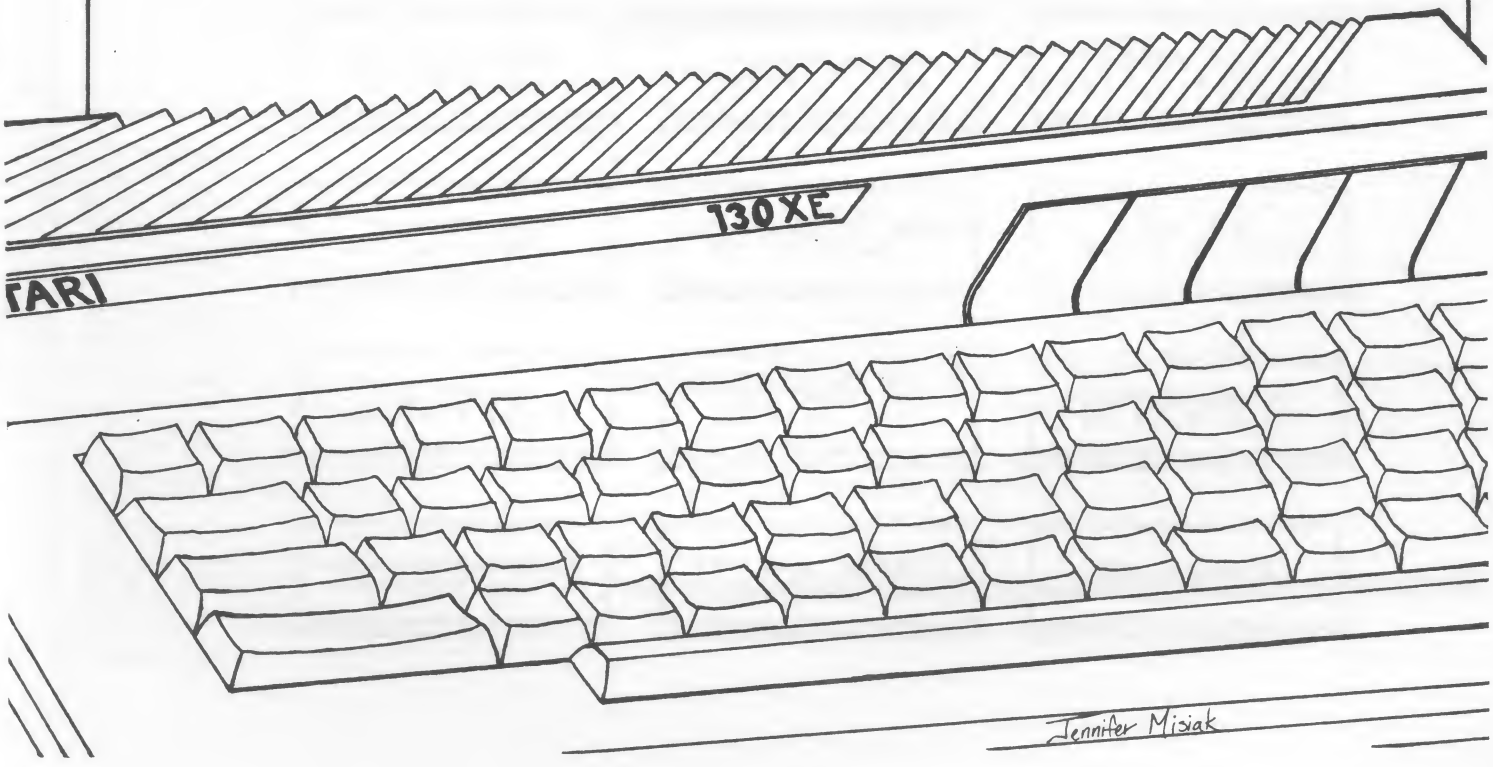
M.A.C.E. JOURNAL

"Devoted Exclusively To The Atari Computer User"

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

ATARIWRITER PLUS
BACK TO BASICS
COMDEX AND THE 520ST
NEWS AND INFORMATION
STICKY BEAR REVIEW
TELECOMMUNICATIONS



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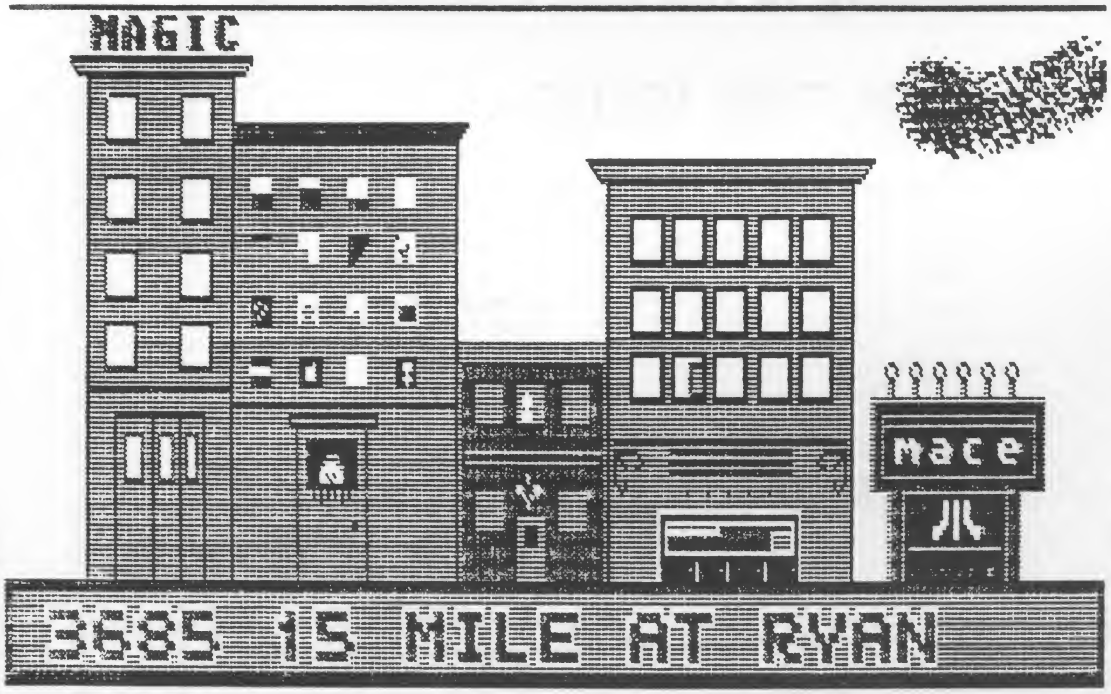

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MACE JOURNAL

March 1986, Vol. 6, No. 3

THE COMPUTER MAGAZINE FOR THE NEW GENERATION OF COMPUTER USER'S.

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ABOUT THE COVER: Design and artwork provided by Jennifer Misiak

Atari Writer +

Jack Holtzhauer

The day before NOVATARI's AtariFest, Joe Waters opened a package from the Atari Corp. Inside were a number of goodies Atari had forwarded for demo purposes at NOVATARI's affair, including a copy of ATARIWRITER PLUS. Joe asked me to do a short "first impressions" article on it. So, I picked it up yesterday and am using it as this is being written.

ATARIWRITER PLUS, first announced at last Winter's Vegas CES, has been a long time in coming. Has it been worth the wait? Probably, although it may fall short of some folks' expectations. How does it differ from the current version of this popular word processor? Functionally both products are almost the same. If you're familiar with ATARIWRITER, using PLUS will be a snap. Major differences? For 130XE owners, memory capacity has been increased to 46.5K - enough for about 32 double-spaced pages. There are several other new bells and whistles including, to my personal delight, software supported double-column printing.

Inasmuch as this is not supposed to be a full-blown review and most readers are familiar with the original product, I'll just concentrate on differences between the two. First of all, PLUS is disk-based. The program disk is double-sided, the standard version on the face and the XE version on the flip side. A second disk containing the PROOFREADER dictionary is also supplied (more on this later). The 66-page manual is well written but lacks an index. No cue card is supplied, but all commands are listed in a "quick reference" section in the rear of the manual.

Main Menu and I/O Operations: The main menu screen will be familiar to all ATARIWRITER users, but two new functions allow you to load the PROOFREADER and MAILMERGE modules (more later). You can also get a directory listing on both drive one and two. Score one! And guess what? The filenames on those multi-file disks don't scroll off the top of the screen while you're trying to read them. The first 38 files are listed in a double-column format. The rest are accessed with tap on the RETURN key. Score another! And at the bottom of the directory screen is a sub-menu allowing you to load, delete, or save a file while the directory is right there in front of you. Score another! Disk format commands can be directed to either drive one or two (Atari's enhanced density is forced if the system is booted with a 1050 drive). By the way, all I/O commands now accept wild-cards. Score two more!

The only other new feature on the menu screen is the global format function. When accessed, it shows all the default formatting settings - top margin, type font, justification, etc. You know, all those funny symbols you're used to seeing on the top line of the edit screen. You can

make any desired changes then and there. Score another!

When first accessing the PRINT command from the menu screen, you are allowed to choose printer-drivers from any one of seven Atari models (825, 1025, 1027, 1020, 1029, and the new XMM 801 and XDM 121), the Epson FX-80, IDS Microprism 480, Juki 6100, or a custom driver created with the printer-driver module (see below). Score another! You are also allowed to "print" to devices other than your printer - to either drive or to RS232 ports R1 thru R4.

Edit Screen and text entry? Pretty much the same, but there are a couple of very helpful new features. PLUS allows you to format the edit screen up to 249 columns wide. Using elite font? Set your columns to 96. Condensed? Set them to 132. 'Course you can only view 40 columns at a time - as you advance towards the right edge of the screen the text scrolls off towards the left. Even so, this is a boon to anyone who has tried to columnize text using the current version. Score one! You can also switch from INSERT to TYPEOVER mode for making corrections. Score another!

Cursor Movement: Only one change here. PLUS allows you to advance or backspace by word, but the two-fingered, two-handed keystroke required (SELECT/LEFT or RIGHT ARROW) is awkward. Score a half-point.

Block Operations: Three new functions. PLUS allows you to alphabetize a list of words or phrases. This might be useful in some situations (index listings, etc.). Score a half point. PLUS also allows you to obtain a word count on your entire text or any portion thereof. Score one! You are also allowed to SAVE a designated block of text. Score another half point. Other block functions - DELETE, MOVE and DUPLICATE are essentially unchanged. The failsafe buffer in the XE version adds approximately 8K more space than the non-XE version.

Search and Replace: About the same, but keystroke sequences are different. You may search for a control character, use "?" as a wildcard in your search string, search upward from the current cursor position, and search without having to respond to a REPLACE query. Score one!

Type Fonts and Embedded Printer Control Codes: The current version of ATARIWRITER provides the user with three "default" type fonts - pica, condensed and proportional - those accessible thru the "G" command. PLUS adds three more - elite, superscript and subscript, the latter two claimed to be useable only with Atari's new XMM801 printers (they produce condensed super/subscript on my Epson compatible Panasonic 1092, just as intended). Both superscript and subscript are, of course, still available using the SELECT/UP-DOWN ARROW sequences. Actually, PLUS allows you to set up as many as nine "default" fonts using it's printer-driver utility (see below). An "emphasized" or "bold" command is provided, and you can access the international character set on your printer, if it has one. As in the original version, embedded printer control codes are accepted. Score three for the new "default" fonts and one more for the other new touches!

Print Formatting: All the standard print formatting features remain unchanged - centering text, headers, justification, line spacing, page numbering, automatic section heading, etc., etc. But PLUS adds one additional feature I mentioned above - software supported double column printing. As far as I'm concerned, this feature is worth the cost of upgrading! And both columns are presented side-by-side on the preview screen. Score several!

Memory Management -- 130XE: As I mentioned above, the 130XE version of PLUS can handle 46K+. The program achieves this by bank-switching three blocks of text each handling 15,872 bytes, the amount shown as "free" when you first access the edit screen. As you approach the capacity of the first bank of 15K+ you must issue a command to "force" the switch to the second bank. The switch is not done automatically, although SAVing from and LOADing to all three banks is handled by the program.

File Compatibility: ATARIWRITER PLUS files are compatible with those produced by the original version and, absent control codes, with text files produced by other word processors compatible with DOS 2.0 or DOS 2.5.

Printer Driver Module: PLUS provides a printer-driver module which allows you to construct a custom driver for your specific printer. You're required to input all those nasty control codes needed to toggle your printer's carriage return, backspace, reverse line feed, etc., functions. But it's easy to use and you can identify as many as nine different type styles using this feature, all of which can be accessed using the "Gn" command. For example, you can set-up "G3" to be emphasized double-strike pica, "G4" to be condensed superscript, "G5" to be NLQ elite, and so forth. Score several!

Mail Merge Module: This module allows you to set-up a simple database which can be accessed from the main program. It can be useful in printing form letters, address labels, etc. You can use the "default" format or construct a custom version , but both are limited to 255 fifteen-field records. Although records can be deleted or edited, they cannot be sorted or accessed on a random basis. You can only page forward, or page back. By inserting an OPTION/M (replaces the old OPTION/INSERT) key sequence anywhere in your text, followed by the number of the database field desired, data can be extracted from the database and automatically inserted into your text material during the printing process. Score a couple more!

Proofreader Module: The PROOFREADER module is loaded from the Main Menu and utilizes a separate dictionary disk containing some 36,000 words. It can be used to check the spelling of most common words in your text material, providing you the option of making corrections as needed, or sending a list of possible errors to your printer. You can also access the dictionary when you're not certain how to spell a given word, although some disk switching is involved. Making an inquiry on the string "fil",

for example, gave me a list of fifty-five words beginning with those three letters. How quickly does PROOFREADER function and what types of words does it fail to recognize? I've just asked for a list of possible errors in the preceding 1280 words in this article. It took six minutes to complete the process and gave me a list of sixty-three possible errors, many of which were repetitive occurrences. Among the words it didn't like were ATARIWRITER, filenames, keystroke, pica and, surprisingly, font.

The PROOFREADER module also allows you to construct a personal file of frequently used words not found in the standard dictionary - words like ATARIWRITER, filenames, keystroke, pica and font, which can be added to the current database. Now, if they would only add a Thesaurus. Score five.

This "short" article has gone on for nearly two pages. It's time to sum up. There's no question that AW PLUS is a major improvement over the original version. It's new I/O, editing, formatting and printing features, combined with it's built-in spelling checker, mail merge and printer-driver utilities, make it an attractive package if properly priced (under $50.00?). How does it stack up with BI's PAPERCLIP? I've never used the latter, but from what I've read AW+ is probably not as full-featured. But, AW+ does have one thing going for it. Very simply stated - it's easy to use! If marketed properly by software vendors, that single consideration should sway many a potential buyer.

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Peachtree Accounting REVIEW

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PEACHTREE ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

-- REVIEWED BY KEN HARMS --

Finally there is a true small-business accounting software package for your Atari. It's the Back To Basics Accounting System from Peachtree Software, the well-known Atlanta publisher of business applications. And it costs only $195.

Back To Basics is also available for the Apple II, Macintosh, Commodore and IBM PC. The Atari version will run on any 8-bit model with 48K memory and two disk drives. It provides the accounting services most cash-oriented small businesses need -- Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable systems linked to a double-entry General Ledger. The program produces attractive 80-column printed reports. I found that installation to a printer was virtually automatic and foolproof.

The comprehensive (if slightly intimidating) 350-page manual starts you off with a 66-page introduction to basic accounting practices. It won't make you a CPA, but you'll be ready to tackle the accounting needs of a reasonably active business.

INSTALLATION

First you have to install the system. This means, you provide the data for all three programs.

General Ledger installation lets you choose options to summarize sales, cost of goods sold, assets, liabilities and equity. Installation will probably take two to four hours, assuming that you have a tax return or trial balance to start with.

Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable ask for the formats of customer and vendor account numbers, and whether to integrate these systems into the General Ledger. This installation process is simple, but could take quite a while if you have large numbers of customers or vendors to insert.

All three systems create their own data disks -- Peachtree recommends using three disks monthly per application. That's nine disks a month, but you can recycle the Payables and Receivables disks after finishing the monthly General Ledger posting.

Each step of the installation process is menu-prompted and the system methodically forces you to complete each step before moving on to the next. You are often prompted to save your data to disk. All this consideration is typical of the solid, helpful programming you'll find throughout Back To

Basics.

Little details are carefully monitored. Did you insert the system disk instead of a blank? Back To Basics will tell you. Did you insert a partly used disk, which would not have room for all the data? Back To Basics automatically reformats it.

And if you (like me) refuse to memorize a chart of accounts, pressing "?" when entering an account number displays the entire chart. However, there is no other online help.

GENERAL LEDGER

General Ledger follows a standard structure -- asset, liability, equity, income, expense. It uses four-digit account numbers, and the last of these digits can track as many as 10 departments. If this multi-department option is chosen, separate income statements are produced, as well as a consolidated statement. A total of 254 accounts are allowed, which should be enough for most companies.

Cash sales procedures are extraordinarily well-done. The program helps you set up a manual cash drawer reconciliation form for day-end cash counting. It then automatically posts each account, even cash "over/short".

Professional-looking general ledger reports cannot be "printed" to the screen but can be produced in hard copy for any period of the month. Reports choices include: Chart of Accounts, Trial Balance, Detailed General Ledger, General Journal, Cash Disbursements Journal, Cash Receipts Journal, Cash Sales Journal, Income Statement, Balance Sheet, and Check Register.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

The receivables module uses a "balance forward" system. Individual invoices are not marked off as paid. Yet it does allow some flexibility to apply payments to various posting periods (60 days, etc.). It also allows up to three cash accounts.

It accepts three sales tax rates which are automatically computed on each invoice. Finance charges are also computed automatically. Each customer can be granted one of 10 terms under which finance charges are figured.

It can accommodate over 200 customer accounts and allows mid-month posting if the disk gets filled with transactions.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Accounts Payable module operated as smoothly as the rest of the system. Detailed data about vendors is provided, manual checks, vendor's debit, credits and invoices can be entered. The system can be linked to the general ledger to automatically update accounting information.

Each payment can be distributed to up to 15 General Ledger accounts. Additions, deletions, and modifications to the prior chart of accounts are allowed.

This will be a lengthy process. You only need to do it once, however.

The Cash Requirements Report is the hot one. It uses projected payment dates and a "pay through" date (i.e., pay everything due through July 1) to project discount and payment amounts. You can therefore anticipate how much cash will be needed. This report can be re-run until the total comes close to the cash available. The system also prints out individual checks, a Check Register, and a Chart Payments List.

The Accounts Receivables and Accounts Payable systems are very similar. They handle over 200 vendors and/or customers. A mid-month posting is available. If you are concerned about whether

The Accounts Receivables and Accounts Payable systems are very similar. They handle over 200 vendors and/or customers. A mid-month posting is available. If you are concerned about whether Back To Basics can handle the demands of your business, by all means phone Peachtree customer service before you buy.

BOTTOM LINE

The Atari is up to the challenge of this complex system. But it requires frequent disk reads and we all know how slow Atari's disk is! You'll also face some disk swapping. In my opinion, the amount is reasonable. No more than four or five swaps per session. The biggest delay is the 20 seconds it takes to update the file after each transaction or master record change. This is a real drag.

Although Peachtree provides free support for 90 days and is concerned about data backups, the company only protects program disks under a policy of "send in your damaged disk and we'll send you another one." Since you'll be relying on this system for critical information needs, this policy is simply not adequate.

All things considered, this software should cut way down on those expensive calls to your CPA. Back To Basics is basic and it's very well-done. If your business isn't too large to fit into this system, the software is well worth the $195 price.

BACK TO BASICS
Peachtree Software, Inc.
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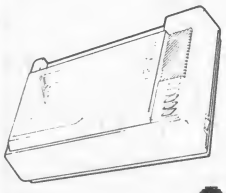

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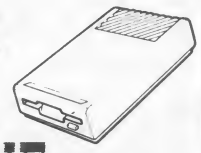

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Atari at COMDEX UPDATE

Edited by Alva Thomas

Borland signed with Atari, at the show, to port Turbo Pascal and Sidekick over to the Atari 520ST. Turbo Pascal will give Atari a high level language and Sidekick will give the ST a true business identity. Of course, this move will improve Borland's cash flow too. Two nice groups getting together. How about that?

Disproving the rumor that Software is not available, Atari had 30 3rd party software houses demoing products at their booth. There were well over 50 programs for the ST up and running, including 6 Valdocs (a professional word processor) modules.

Valpaint looked great on the color monitor (under a grand for the whole machine, including mouse). Jim Jeter, Project Leader for the Atari 520ST at Raising Star Industries (RSI), changed the monitor colors to black with green text to run the Spreadsheet, looked surprisingly like the QX-10. GEM lets you do that. The Valdocs Editor was not shown.

An additional attraction at the RSI table was Malcom Cecil (musician and computer expert par excellence). He played digitized versions of Bach and Handel on the ST. Through a good amplifier and speaker it sounded great (remember the 520ST has MIDI ports).

Other's with strong attractions at Atari were StoneWare with an excellent data base and VIP Technologies with a Lotus 123 Clone so good you can even transport data to it from 123 files. Both programs will be priced under $150.00.

Reprinted: Dec 1985/Jan 1986
ValWorld GAZETTE, "COMDEX Fall'85"

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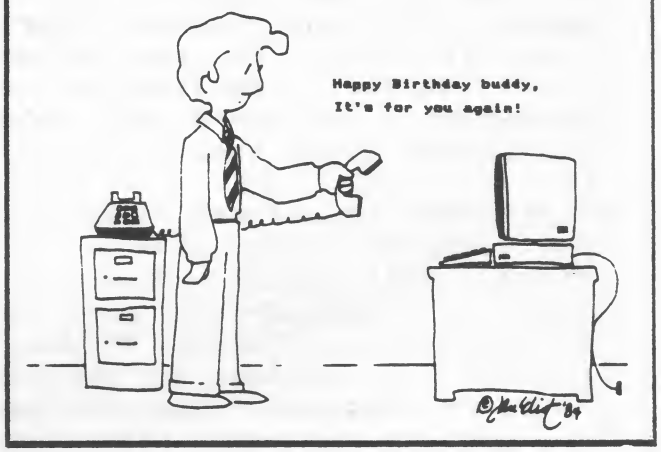

News and Information

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ANTIC ONLINE NEWS -- FEBRUARY ROUND-UP
BY GIGI BISSON
ANTIC ASSISTANT EDITOR

ELECTRONIC ARTS PLANS TO RELEASE 8-BIT SOFTWARE

Electronic Arts software company president Trip Hawkins has written the last letter he will ever need to send to Antic Magazine.

"The response of your readers to Antic editorials is growing," wrote Hawkins. "We have received quite a few letters." Quite a few indeed. In a letter-writing campaign initiated over nine months ago with a May, 1985 Antic editorial, not only Antic readers but the entire Atari community begged EA and other major software publishers to release more software for the 8-bit Atari computers.

EA promises to release Adventure Construction Set, Heart of Africa, Mail Order Monsters, Marble Madness, Racing Destruction Set, Skyfox, Software Golden Oldies (Software Country), and Ultima IV (Origin Systems) for the Atari XL/XE 8-bit line of computers in 1986.

"We hope to see at retail the kind of response we have seen in our mailbox!" Hawkins says in conclusion.

PERCOM REPAIRS

Percom Data Corp or Dallas, Texas has awarded STS Computers of Falls, Church, VA a nationwide contract to repair all Percom floppy disk drives, including those for Atari computers. STS has also developed a new operating system ROM. STS engineers are soliciting comment from users concerning firmware bugs in hopes of improving the drives. Schematics are available for $5. Contact: STS Computers, 1073 W. Broad St., Falls Church, VA 22046. (703) 237-0558.

TRAKED DOWN

Ever since the manufacturer went out of business, Trak disk drive owners have been unable to track down repairs. Integrated Computer Resources of Chicago will repair and upgrade Trak drives and supply printer cables for the AT-D2 drive to utilize the built-in 4K printer buffer. Write to: Integrated Computer Resources, Inc., 247 N. Neltnor Blvd., Suite G1F, West Chicago, Illinois, 60185. (312) 231-6104. (This helpful information came to us online from J. Kosiorek, 70717,3675.)

BRODERBUND STILL GROWING

The media broadly proclaimed that 1985 was a "dismal" year for the personal computer

industry. Broderbund Software proved otherwise. Bolstered by several top selling home productivity and educational packages, spearheaded by the phenomenal bestseller, Print Shop, Broderbund doubled their sales to $20 million during 1985.

The December issue of Inc. magazine ranked Broderbund as the 13th fastest-growing privately held company in the United States.

Microcomputer software distributors First Software and Softsel International also experienced rapid growth during 1985.

ATARI VS. THE WORLD

Atari Corp. has been sued again. This time for $55.2 million by an (unnamed) Japanese printer maker that claims Atari reneged on a contract to buy 500,000 printers.

ST DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Will the ST become a challenger to the Macintosh in the hot desktop publishing market? According to the United Kingdom Atari magazine, Page 6, a new software package, Fleet Street Editor, could change the face of society newsletters and small publications. This full design and layout system from Mirrorsoft is capable of driving a phototypesetter. Expected UK debut is next month. Meanwhile, stateside computer market analysts are calling desktop publishing "the hula hoop of 1986."

THE YUPPIE ST

"Atari's computer now a serious threat to the Macintosh. Will the Amiga survive?" You'll find this headline in Newsweek magazine, but it's not on a news story. It's an advertisment.

JS&A, a nationwide mail order marketer that pitches high-technology "products that think" to upscale readers of magazines such as Playboy and OMNI, is now pitching the Atari 520ST. Their full-page ads claim "the ST will open up a major fight in the personal computer market," and then proceed to make a detailed comparison of the Macintosh to the ST. In a bold approach, the Northbrook, IL company invites owners to "put the ST next to your Mac or Amiga or even IBM," after a small down payment, for a 30-day trial basis. The components are sold separately. The ST computer and mouse for $299, disk drive $199, and monochrome monitor $199.

NEW PRODUCTS

Epyx Software will release Winter Games, Rogue (originally a mainframe adventure game popular on college campuses) and Temple of Apshai Trilogy for the Atari ST and the Commodore Amiga in March.

Paul Henckel, of Quickview Systems of Los Altos, CA and the author of "The Elements of Friendly Software Design," (Warner Books, 1985) has finished Zoomracks for the ST and IBM PC family. It uses "racks" rather than files to display information in a compact way onscreen. Visualize this as a stack of time cards. All of

the cards are visible at once, with most of one card hidden behind the next card, and only one or two lines of information about each card visible. Antic saw this one at our office and the review is underway.

ATARIS HELP BILK THE BANK?

How did Richard Mamarella get $22 million in bank loans from a New Jersey bank? According to a recent Wall Street Journal account, Mamarella bribed a junior bank officer with $30,000 and two Atari sets," to approve the fraudulent loans. After pleading guilty to bank fraud and extortion charges, Mamarella is serving a nine-year prison term.

DRI

Batteries Included may have difficulty shipping Atari ST GEM applications by their original April deadline. Like other programmers and developers, BI is anxiously waiting for Digital Research of Monterey, CA to finish up the GEM 68K developer's kit. Industry analysts say delays in shipment of final versions of the kit is a serious problem for ST software developers.

Research and development seems to be continuing at the Monterey, CA-based developer of the GEM operating system for Atari and IBM. DRI has placed ads in the Silicon Valley-Area San Jose Mercury News searching for graphics development Software Engineers. "Become involved with the team responsible for developing this leading technology of the future -- right now! Responsibilities include exploratory development and prototyping of new products, writing graphics applications in C for the GEM environment, and implementation of new device drivers."

RUMOR HUMOR

This satirical product announcement by Albert Lew of ABACUS, was found recently in the San Francisco-area users group's newsletter:

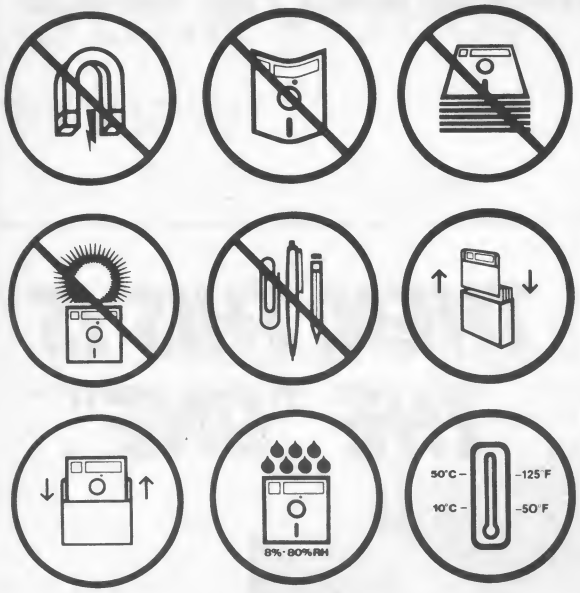
"Did you hear about the new $10 EPROM burner coming from Atari? Stick some 128K EPROMS in the blue plastic slots, and pop into the toaster oven. The docs recommend that you think hard about what you want burned, (Commodore, Apple, and IBM are suggested topics) and pray. If you are agnostic, you are requested to send more money to Atari until you get reasonable results."

HELP for your U-Print

Digital Devices makes a printer interface for the 8- bit Atari called U-Print. The initial releases of the product had a few bugs in it and the company originally established a replacement policy which they now feel is unfair.

They have asked ANTIC to pass the word that all owners of the earlier U-Print may receive a FREE exchange. Simply return your original unit along with $6.00 for shipping. You can tell the earlier models by the existence of a copy switch.

For extended media life—
here's how to take care of your flexible disk



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Stickybear

REVIEW

Ann McBain Ezzell

Educational software used to be limited to dry drill-and-practice programs. These were a good way to keep the kids out of the teacher's way for a while, but not the sort of thing a child would choose for a rainy day activity. Some software developers started writing arcade style "educational" games - "Invasion of the Alien Equations", and so on. These games may keep a child entertained, but many people object to their violent nature and question their educational value. Weekly Reader Family Software has come out with a series of games and educational programs for the young (and the not-so-young) that feature fantastic graphics, attractive packaging, extra goodies like posters and stickers, and, best of all, smooth-running, well-engineered programs that will sneak up and teach your child a thing or two while she thinks she's playing a game.

I bought Stickybear Opposites for my 2 year old daughter, who has recently shown interest in our computers but isn't quite old enough for most of the programs we have. This program is an excellent introduction to the computer for small children. They can learn to use a joystick or certain keys on the keyboard to load in colorful pictures of Stickybear, then animate the pictures to demonstrate opposites like "up" and "down", "near" and "far", or "empty" and "full". A young child may spend a lot of time at first simply loading in one screen after another, but soon she will learn to manipulate the joystick and identify the opposites. For older children who are learning to read, the word identifying each picture appears on the screen.

In addition to the program disk, this package includes a sheet of Stickybear stickers, a large, colorful poster, a parents' guide, and a 32-page hardbound book, Yes and No. The whole thing comes in a sturdy vinyl binder. We've come a long way since the days of a disk and a photocopied set of instructions in a zip-lock bag.

Stickybear Bop also comes with stickers and a poster, as well as a cardboard game to play with when Mom just has to use the word processor. This is really more of a game than an educational program, but it is great for a slightly older child whose parents don't want him zapping aliens or blowing up spies. The game is based on an old-style shooting gallery, but you flip white balls at the animated objects floating across the top of the screen. They disappear with a satisfying cartoon "BOP" when hit. As the levels progress, you must bop objects being juggled by Mr. and Mrs. Stickybear (not so easy, since they can only be bopped at the top of their arcs), or bop birds which try to steal your

supply of balls.

There are several other packages featuring Stickybear; you can also buy Stickybear Numbers, Stickybear Basket Bounce, Stickybear ABCs, and Stickybear Shapes. The age recommendations vary with the programs; Stickybear Opposites is for ages 3 to 6, while Stickybear Bop claims to be for ages 5 to adult (I don't play it anymore, because I got tired of being beaten by my 6 year old son). Unlike so many programs which were originally written for other machines, these Stickybear programs have excellent graphics, close to the best I've seen, and certainly far beyond the level found in most programs for young children. If you ever get bored with the programs themselves, you can sit there and try to figure out just how they manage the animation (it sure ain't player-missile graphics!).

Each of the Stickybear packages can be purchased by mail order for as little as $19.95; I got my two on a special 2-for-1 offer at Christmas. Even at the higher price, though, these are definitely worth the investment if there are little people at home getting peanut butter on your Atari.

Guest Speaker

ERICK WUJICK
DETROIT NEWS

March 18, 1986
At 7:30 P.M.
Southfield Civic Center
M.A.C.E. Meeting

Letters
To The Editor

Dear MACE Journal Editor:

This is a good news/bad news letter. First the good news:

I enjoyed meeting you at the last meeting, and am happy that somebody with your boundless enthusiasm and energy has volunteered to be our new editor. Our organization would be much stronger if we had more dedicated people like yourself.

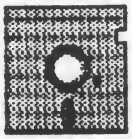
The good news makes me feel a little guilty about the bad news. I acknowledge that I couldn't begin to keep up with your level of effort, so what right do I have to complain? I will not volunteer to be Editor, so why don't I just shut up? I think you know the answers: too many of our members shut up too much and you officers need our feedback. So here's the bad news:

First, for goodness sakes get a spelling checker. There were over one hundred mistakes in the February Journal. Second, my article had its meaning completely changed at one point by the omission of a whole line of print. Shown below is what I submitted:

> "Like the other multi-computer magazines, I finish each issue wishing there had been more coverage of my brand. In this group, however, I like HCM better than Compute!, although HCM

(continued on page 26)

SSDD DISKS: 10 for $ 5.98



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Michael Rudy

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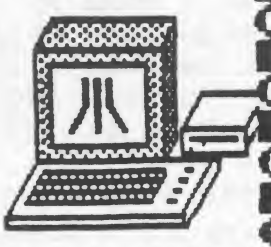

Exit OnLine

Sharie Middlebrook
Mike Mitchell

Welcome to Exit On-Line. In this column we will try to help you answer some of the questions that you have concerning local Bulletin Board System's (BBS) and the terminal (Amodem) programs that are used to connect to them.

First, we would like to explain why some of you can't upload or download files over 255 sectors long. This is the fault of your terminal program and not the BBS you have accessed. Some of the terminal programs available to you DO NOT support a file transfer over 255 sectors. This is because the program block counter is not reset when it reaches 255. Some of these programs are, AMODEM42.835, PROTERM and HOMETERM.

Now on to a problem that some 835 and 1030 modem users may be having. If you have AMODEM42.835 or ETMODEM, you may have found that when you download a file, your system will not write the file to your disk drive. It just makes a buzzing sound instead. If this is happening to you, then here is a simple fix. If you have AMODEM42.835, you will have to LOAD the program into memory and add this line to the program.

```
2802                                XIO
90,#MODEM,0,0,"T:":FOR  DL=1  TO
15:NEXT DL
```

This is the command to close (suspend for 835/1030) the modem. You have to close the modem before you can go to any other device. Now, just SAVE the program back to the disk under the same filename. Note: always work with a backup copy of your program.

If you have ETMODEM, then follow the same procedure as above, but add this line.

```
2802 GOSUB CLM
```

This will do the same thing as the XIO in AMODEM42.835, since the XIO is already in the program.

Many you MPP modem users have experienced a sudden loss of carrier while connected to a BBS. This is the fault of your terminal cartridge software. The cartridge program will time-out (disconnect) while waiting for the BBS to fill it's buffer. There is no simple fix for this problem. But, you can get a utility disk for your MPP modem called MPP DRIVER PLUS. This disk contains a file that will allow you to run software written for the Hayes modem.

Have you ever found your self typing in a message on one of the local BBS's, when suddenly, you find you are back at the main message prompt having to start all over again? You have probably used a word which the sysop will NOT allow on his or her board. If you persist in the

use of this word, you will probably find that the board will log you off. This usually applies to the sysop's name and a list of words too graphic to be detailed here.

We hope that the topics discussed in this first article will help answer some of the questions you've had about telecommunication with the Atari. If you have any questions you would like answered, send them to,

M.A.C.E.
P.O. Box 2785
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Attn: Exit On-Line

Your questions will be answered via this column, so why not drop us a line. We will be happy to help you.

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Thanks

This month's Journal was compiled and prepared courtesy of

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BBS

MICHIGAN ATARI BBSystems

The following is a listing of Michigan ATARI BBSystems that I have accessed and verified to be working as of 2/8/86. A BBS had to be up 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to be included in this list. Compiled by Tom Sturza.

A.A.A.B.	(3) 662-0086	*3
A.I.R. PORT	(3) 641-8688	*3/12
A.R.C.A.D.E.	(3) 978-8087	*3/12
ATARI ETHERNET	(3) 531-1701	*3/12
ATARI TOOLBOX	(3) 247-0094	*3/12
BAUDVILLE	(3) 525-5172	*3/12
BAUDWAY	(3) 399-1775	*3
BUNKY'S BOARD	(3) 546-3689	*3/12
C.H.A.O.S.	(5) 371-1106	*3
COUNTRY PEDDLER	(3) 449-8544	*3/12
CRAZY HOUSE	(3) 278-1727	*3/12
DARTBOARD	(3) 287-4824	*3
DOGHOUSE	(3) 398-3078	*3/12
FREEDOM BOARD	(3) 771-4126	*3
HOME BOARD	(3) 585-2168	*3
IMPERIAL	(3) 687-6045	*3
M.A.C.E. EAST	(3) 585-2165	*3/12
M.A.C.E. WEST	(3) 582-0657	*3/12
M.A.G.I.C.	(3) 978-1685	*3
ROBOT FACTORY	(3) 563-6177	*3/12
V.O.I.C.E.	(3) 532-8410	*3/12

(3) = 313 (5) = 517
*3=300 BAUD *3/12=300 & 1200 Baud

IBM-ST Conversion

David Small

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You can read and write IBM PC disks on your Atari ST -- if you connect a 40-track 5 1/4-inch disk drive to your 3 1/2-inch disk drive. Or...if you don't need IBM file compatibility for an ST, you can connect a 2-sided, 80-track, 5 1/4-inch drive and store 720K on one disk. This will save you money because 5 1/4-inch disks and drives are cheaper than 3 1/2-inch disks and drives.

But can you use the disk drive from your 8-bit Atari? Not if the drive is an 810, 1050, or an Atari workalike, such as an Indus, Astra, or Rana. However, ATR8000 and Percom drives will work. They are "industry standard" drives that communicate via standard 34-pin interface connector.

THE WARNING

Before actually telling how to hook up a 5 1/4-inch drive to your ST, we must caution you that this is no job for electronics beginners. You need to solder and to understand the circuitry of whatever 5 1/4-inch you are using. Debugging your new system can be a frustrating experience. Not only that, open up your ST drive and you'll violate the warranty.

RIBBONS AND PINS

Of the 34 pins in the standard industry connector, only about 14 are used. The Atari ST brings these 14 wires out in a short, thick cable that plugs from the ST into the first drive's "IN" connector. This cable uses a non-standard 14-pin DIN connector, but it carries industry standard signals.

Our goal is to get those signals to a standard 34-pin connector and thus to a standard disk drive.

Theoretically, we'd put a 34-pin edge connector on one end of a ribbon cable, 14-pin DIN connector on the other, and we'd have our disk drive cable. However, in practice I couldn't find a 14-pin DIN connector.

INSIDE THE DRIVE

Therefore, the method I chose to use was to tap into the signals inside the 3 1/2-inch ST drive. Besides voiding your warranty, this will probably require you to cut a slot in the drive case for the new ribbon cable.

If you open up the drive (use a phillips screwdriver) you'll find the 14-pin DIN connector expands to (surprise!) an industry standard 34-pin ribbon cable.

Of course, it does this inside the shield to prevent radio noise from leaking out. A small circuit board has the two 14-pin connectors (IN and OUT) mounted

on it, and it connects to the 34-pin ribbon cable inside the drive.

I put a "tap" from the 34-pin ribbon cable in the drive to the 34-pin ribbon cable running to my remote 5 1/4-inch disk drive. I then used a DB-40, 40-pin male and female clamp-on connector to clamp one side to the ribbon cable and the other to the remote drive's cable. Then I plugged the two DB-40s together.

You don't have to use a DB-40. Any clamp-on connector that covers the first 34 pins will work fine.

KINKY WIRING

But there's a catch. Atari does something kinky with the drive B select signal. It's on pin 6 of the DIN connector when coming from the ST. But inside drive A it is switched from "IN" connector pin 6, to "OUT" connector pin 5, where it becomes drive select for drive B.

This means Atari ST drives always listen on pin 5 for select, and the daisy chain scheme gives the proper drive the correct signal. Thus the two connectors on the back of the ST drive are not interchangeable, like other Atari drives. Plug your ST into the "OUT" connector, the drive won't work, period.

Therefore, we have to jump from pin 6 of the DIN connect (drive B select) to pin 12 of the ribbon cable (drive B select) to get this signal across. Otherwise, it doesn't show up on the 34-pin cable. This is easy to do on the bottom of the 3 1/2-inch drive's DIN connect board.

Now we need to set the remote drive as drive B. Sometimes it's called drive 1 or drive 2, depending on whether the manufacturer numbers drives at 0 or 1.

When a drive is idle, a five-volt signal (HIGH) exists on the BUSY line. When the computer wants to access the drive, it pulls down this signal to zero (LOW). When the computer is finished with the drive, it releases the signal and the drive "pulls up" the signal to it's original five volts. If two drives are hooked up, only one may contain pull up circuitry because the computer can only pull down five volts.

Pull-up circuitry usually is contained in a chip in the drive. And now you are at a point where you must know enough about your 5 1/4-inch drive to figure out where the chip is.

Since the ST drive A contains all the pull-up termination circuitry we need, we must remove termination packs from the remote drive. In the case of my Tandem TM-100-2 drive, I also needed to deal with the select line termination, since it doesn't go through the resistor pack. I had to clip resistor R14 from my Tandem to get rid of the added termination.

Special Note: The ST monitor throws out a lot of magnetism. If you don't keep your drive at least one foot from the monitor, the disk's heads will pick up the monitor's signals and confuse the read data. You'll immediately notice data error if

you get your drive close to the monitor. This is a good reason to use a fairly long ribbon cable (3 feet or so) (We haven't noticed this problem in-house. ANTIC ED)

ALL DONE

All right, assume you have added an 80-track drive. Put the disk in, close the door and turn on the system. Click on drive B, select FORMAT, and format the disk either single-sided or double-sided. From then on, treat the 80-track drive as an Atari ST drive. Note: 80 track drives have traditionally been persnickety, which is why 40-track drives remain popular. Keep a sharp eye on the drive's alignment. It takes very little misalignment to make a disk that only one 80-track drive in the whole world can read.

If you've added a 40-track drive, you may use it as an ST drive in only a limited fashion. You can't use FORMAT or a track copy, because they'll try to force the drive past it's 40th track.

IBM ST

On the other hand, you can put an IBM PC disk in that 40-track drive, and click on the B icon. It'll pull up the disk's directory into folders and "text only" files.

You'll notice on the top of the window a PC-DOS type of "pathname" consisting of multiple (if needed) folders and a file name. GEM simply turns the concept of pathnames into folder icons and moves you through the path by your actions of selecting, opening, or closing a folder.

Of course, you can't run IBM programs because they are written in IBM assembly language, which the ST cannot understand. However, you can freely copy and use text files and the data within them. Furthermore, if you write back out from the ST to the PC disk, you'll find that an IBM has no trouble reading what you wrote.

Letters

(continued from page 20)

lacks advertising and Bill Wilkinson. Family Computing doesn't even try to compete in the program listing category and is aimed at very young or very inexperienced users."

Your omission totally changed what I was trying to communicate, and left me appearing to contradict myself in my own article.

You may, if you wish, print this letter and your reply in the next Journal. I always hoped we'd have a letters column, anyway.

Sincerely,
Gordon Totty

Dear Mr. Totty:

We sincerely apologize for any misunderstandings that may have arisen from the mistakes in the February issue. As you can see from this issue, we are in the process of changing the Journal format will try to be more careful in the future.

The Editors

New Books

B. Dalton Oakland Mall

MAPPING THE ATARI
(REVISED EDITION)
BY IAN CHADWICK
$16.96

The comprehensive source book and memory guide for beginning and veteran programmers for the 400, 800, XL and the XE. This book serves as a doorway to understanding the inner workings of the Atari for the beginning programmer, as a tutorial for the intermediate, and as a reference work book for the advanced. This book provides the most detailed discussion yet offered on almost every known memory location.

DR. C WACKO'S
MIRACLE GUIDE TO DESIGNING
AND PROGRAMMING YOUR OWN
ATARI COMPUTER ARCADE GAMES.
$12.95

Mastering Pac Man isn't much solace if you're a real computer gamer. What you realy want to know is how to write them. Dr. Wacko explains everything Atari Basic programmers need to create their own blockbusters. What's more, the kindly doctor gives you absolutely free and without obligation, never before published programs that make designing and programming your games a snap. Inside tips on designing arcade games that will turn humdrum into bestsellers.

PRESENTING THE ATARI ST
BY L. ENGLISH & J. WALKOWIAK
$16.95

A new era is beginning in the world of computers, the line which separates the home from the business computer is less distinct as machines such as the Atari 520 ST appear. These new super machines carry a price tag aimed at the home user. But because of the high performance capabilities of these new computers, they can also be used for serious business, scientific and engineering applications. The goal of this book is not only to provide the reader with a summary of the capabilities and features of this fascinating new machine, it should also serve as a good source of information for prospective buyers.

ADVANCED PROGRAMMING TECHNIQUES
FOR YOUR ATARI INCLUDING
GRAPHICS AND VOICE PROGRAMS
BY LINDA M. SCHREIBER.
$14.50

Here's a book that shows you how to understand the special characteristics of your Atari and how to use them for all sorts of new & exciting sound and graphics effects. You can create your own character sets, mix graphic modes, use player-missile graphics and screen flipping. Understand and use interrupts, create your own self-booting disk and cassette programs. Everything you need to become an advanced programmer, able to use all of your Atari's unique capablilties, is included in this outstanding source book.

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NEXT MEETING 03/18/86 7:00 PM

Southfield Pavilion--Ten and a Half Mile Road and Evergreen

MEET THE NEXT GENERATION... JOIN AN ATARI USER'S GROUP

Imagine you're at a meeting with other ATARI Home Computer users just like yourself. You could trade discoveries. Exchange information on different software programs. Find answers to questions many of you share. When you join Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, that's exactly what happens!

We provide you with software reviews, product demonstrations, guest speakers and a large selection of public domain software.

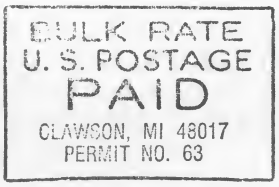
But, that's just part of it, Get involved, there's a wealth of information available to share!

Are you interested in new software? Curious about the new Atari computers? Intrigued by computer graphics? You would like to know more, wouldn't you?

On Tuesday, March 18th at 7 PM at the Southfield Civic Center, ERICK WUJCIK from THE DETROIT NEWS will excite and inform you of the news on the Arari front!

For more details or general information call (313) 589-1789.

MICHIGAN ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS
P.O. BOX 2785
SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN 48037



IMPORTANT DATED MATERIAL

PLEASE DO NOT DELAY